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As COVID rates skyrocket, health officials warn Canadians to wear plenty of sunscreen

12 HOURS AGO *by* MARY GILLIS (HTTPS://WWW.THEBEAVERTON.COM/AUTHOR/MARY-GILLIS/) (@LIVING_MARBLE (HTTPS://TWITTER.COM/LIVING_MARBLE))

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OTTAWA (https://www.thebeaverton.com/tag/ottawa/) – Canada is experiencing extremely high COVID-19 (https://www.thebeaverton.com/tag/covid-19/) rates this summer (https://www.thebeaverton.com/tag/summer/), and health officials across the country have responded by alerting Canadians to the heightened risk of sunburn while engaging in summer activities.

"Even though the summer is almost over doesn't mean that the dangers of sun (https://www.thebeaverton.com/tag/sun/) exposure go away," Dr. Theresa Tam, Chief Public Health Officer of Canada, said in an interview about current health issues facing Canadians. "In fact, Canadians should be wearing sunscreen (https://www.thebeaverton.com/tag/sunscreen/) all year round to prevent skin cancer."

When asked how Canadians should be protecting themselves from the current COVID (https://www.thebeaverton.com/tag/covid/) wave making its way across Canada and the inevitable COVID waves the country will face in the fall and winter (https://www.thebeaverton.com/tag/winter/), Tam was adamant that people not forget other forms of sun protection, like hats and sunglasses.

Quebec public health officials have echoed Tam's concerns about skin cancer when asked about the current COVID surge in Quebec which is killing dozens of people every week and has caused numerous outbreaks in long-term care homes and hospitals. Several health facilities have instituted face mask requirements, but the Quebec Health Ministry has made it clear that this is primarily to protect people's faces from the damage caused by UV rays.

While BC has declared an end to the COVID-19 public health emergency and removed the requirement that healthcare (https://www.thebeaverton.com/tag/healthcare/) workers be vaccinated against the virus to reduce their risk of passing it on to vulnerable patients, at a recent press conference BC Health Minister Adrian Dix was pleased to inform BC residents that it's now easier than ever for them to protect themselves from the sun's ray thanks to multiple free public sunscreen dispensers across the province.

Following a question about the waste-water evidence of a massive August COVID surge in BC, Dix stopped talking and became completely unresponsive until Provincial Health Officer Bonnie Henry grabbed the microphone and said, "COVID is over, you all need to accept that, and also maybe that it never even happened. But we can't pretend the sun doesn't exist, so don't forget your SPF."

At press time, updated versions of the COVID vaccines (https://www.thebeaverton.com/tag/vaccines/) that were recently approved for use in the US still have not been approved by the Canadian government because they forgot to assign anyone to evaluate them.

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